

## An Litir Bheag le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 178 (which corresponds to Litir 482). Ruairidh can be contacted at [roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk).

*Last week I was telling you about the Statutes of Iona. They did a lot of damage to the Gaels. They happened in 1609. There were two clauses in the statutes which were terribly damaging.*

*The government demanded that the Gaelic gentry send their eldest sons to the Lowlands. Those lads were receiving an Anglophone education. If a clan chief didn't have a son, he had to send his eldest daughter to school in the Lowlands.*

*And bards were no longer permitted to travel around. Before that, the bards were receiving support from the clan chiefs. The government said that the bards were like "beggars [and] vagabonds". They were not at all! They were very well educated. That was the government's propaganda.*

*The government was wanting to do three things. The sons of the clan chiefs were living in the Lowlands. Thus, their fathers were well behaved – or the government was going to arrest the sons. The*

An t-seachdain sa chaidh bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Reachdas Ì, *The Statutes of Iona*. Rinn e cron mòr air na Gàidheil. Thachair e ann an sia ceud deug 's a naoi (1609). Bha dà earrainn anns an reachdas a bha uabhasach millteach.

Dh'iarr an riaghaltas air na h-uaislean Gàidhealach na mic a bu shine aca a chur don Ghalltachd. Bha na gillean sin a' faighinn foghlam Beurla. Mura robh gille aig ceann-cinnidh, bha aige ri a nighean a bu shine a chur gu sgoil air a' Ghalltachd.

Agus cha robh cead tuilleadh aig bàird a dhol timcheall. Roimhe sin bha na bàird a' faighinn taic bho na cinn-chinnidh. Thuir an riaghaltas gun robh na bàird coltach ri "beggars [and] vagabonds". Cha robh idir! Bha iad gu math foghlamaichte. B' e sin propaganda an riaghaltais.

Bha an riaghaltas ag iarraidh trì rudan a dhèanamh. Bha na gillean aig na cinn-chinnidh a' fuireach air a' Ghalltachd. Mar sin, bha an athraichean modhail – air neo bha an riaghaltas a' dol a chur nan gillean an

*sons were receiving a Protestant education. And they were going to become non-Gaelic in character.*

*A gulf opened between clan chiefs and their tenantry. The gentry became non-Gaelic in character. And how many clan chiefs today have Gaelic? Are there any?*

*The government was wanting to get rid of Gaelic. In 1616, they passed an act of parliament. One aim of the act was to establish Anglophone education. Another aim of the act was to get rid of Gaelic.*

*There will be a special year next year. It is called Homecoming Scotland 2009. They will be marking many good things about Scotland.*

*Perhaps we should also be remembering the Statutes of Iona. In 1609, the state started to demonstrate a disregard for Gaelic. And bad policies were in place for nearly four hundred years. I hope we won't forget that.*

grèim. Bha na gillean a' faighinn foghlam Pròstanach. Agus bha iad a' dol a dh'fhàs Gallta.

Dh'fhosgail caolas eadar cinn-chinnidh agus an tuath. Dh'fhàs na h-uaislean Gallta. Agus cia mheud ceann-chinnidh an-diugh aig a bheil Gàidhlig? A bheil gin ann idir?

Bha an Riaghaltas ag iarraidh cur às don Ghàidhlig. Ann an sia ceud deug is sia-deug (1616), rinn iad achd pàrlamaid. B' e aon amas na h-achd foghlam Beurla a stèidh-eachadh. B' e amas eile na h-achd cur às don Ghàidhlig.

Tha bliadhna shònraichte gu bhith ann an ath-bhliadhna. 'S e an t-ainm a th' oirre *Homecoming Scotland 2009*. Bidh iad a' comharrachadh mòran rudan matha mu Alba.

'S dòcha gum bu chòir dhuinn cuideachd a bhith a' cuimhneachadh Reachdas Ì. Ann an sia ceud deug 's a naoi (1609), thòisich an stàit ar dìmeas a dhèanamh air a' Ghàidhlig. Agus bha droch phoileasaidhean ann airson faisg air ceithir cheud bliadhna. Tha mi an dòchas nach dìochuimhnich sinn sin.